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SYSTEM DESIGN AND SIGNAL PROCESSING - VOLUME 1

Editors
Asan G. A. Muthalif
Amir Akramin Shafie
Siti Fauziah Toha
Iskandar Al-Thani Mahmood

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CHAPTER 36

Virtual Modeling of Two-Wheeled Wheelchair using MSc Visual Nastran 4D

Salmiah Ahmad\textsuperscript{1, a}, M. O. Tokhi\textsuperscript{2, b}

\textsuperscript{1}Department of Mechatronics Engineering, Kulliyyah of Engineering, International Islamic University Malaysia, Jalan Gombak, 53100 Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia

\textsuperscript{2}Department of Automatic Control and Systems Engineering, University of Sheffield, Mappin Street, S1 3JD, United Kingdom

\textsuperscript{a}salmiah@iium.edu.my, \textsuperscript{b}o.tokhi@sheffield.ac.uk

36.1 Introduction

Wheelchair on two wheels is a very complex, highly nonlinear system that has several complicated features to be modelled and controlled, [1]. A human has a significant mass when sitting on the wheelchair, thus the two-wheeled wheelchair is modelled with double links that mimic double inverted pendulum scenario. Therefore maintaining the nonlinear feature in two-wheeled wheelchair would be very much needed so that the approach may be easily implemented in practice. Therefore, a new wheelchair model is developed using four-dimension (4D) design software called MSC Visual Nastran 4D (VN). This modelling software can provide visualization showing the lifting, stabilizing as well as other wheelchair mobility features and has been used for many other applications, [2-5]. It is used to model the standard wheelchair and to integrate with MATLAB/Simulink for control purposes. The wheelchair model developed is used for designing and testing control strategies thus saving time, energy and financial cost before it is implemented at laboratory level or manufactured.

36.2 MSC Visual Nastran 4D software

MSC Visual Nastran 4D (VN) is a powerful general purpose finite element analysis solution for small to complex assemblies. It combines several tasks in a user friendly environment involving computer-aided design (CAD), motion, finite element analysis (FEA), measurement as well as control. It provides a wide range of modelling and analysis capabilities, including linear static, displacement, strain, stress, vibration, heat transfer and more. Moreover, it can handle any material type from plastic and metal to composites and hyperelastic materials. It can be associated with most of the drawing tools such as Autodesk Inventor and Mechanical Desktop, Solid Edge and Solid Works. Some measurement capabilities of VN are, to measure forces, torques, friction, velocity and collisions using meters provided in the software environment. It can also determine vibration modes, buckling and heat transfer on a system modelled. The software is able to calculate loads and stresses of the assembly automatically. One of the specialties of VN is facilities of rendering and animation where simulation video can be captured and replayed at any time. Different camera locations can be used to obtain various angles of simulation. VN allows integration between the designed models with control strategies in MATLAB/Simulink environment; VN icon will appear in Simulink library tool box such that the model in VN is called using this icon. Input and output of the model in VN is defined using this icon, which can be seen as in Fig. 36.1.